Visit of Indian Industry delegation to the USA

756. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a first ever Indian industry delegation with focus on the defence sector visited the US in the month of May-June, 2002 to strengthen bilateral defence-industrial ties and seek new opportunities for mutually beneficial business;

(b) if so, the main topics discussed during the visits;

(c) whether any concrete agreements have been reached between India and the US on defence ties; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. A 10 Member Mission led by Chairman, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), National Committee on Defence visited USA from 13 to 17 May 2002.

(b) This was an exploratory mission to understand US defence export policy; to publicise India's new defence industrial policy especially its desire to promote joint ventures with limited Foreign Director Investiment; and to apprise the US industry of the strengths of Indian industry. All discussions related to these topics.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Weapons deal with the United States

757. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has signed the first major weapons deal with the United States in more than three decades;

(b) if so, what are the total defence deals signed between the two countries;